THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have issued instructions to banks from time to time so as to ensure that more underprivileged sections are given proper attention in the matter of allocation of credit in the priority sector and that the advances to weaker sections reach a level of 25 per cent of priority sector advances or 10 per cent of Net Bank Credit.

CBI's Dossiers on Customs Personnel

1672. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the CBI has prepared dossiers on a large number of customs and excise men containing details of favours granted by them; and

(b) if so, the action taken by Government on these cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The CBI has not prepared any such dossiers.

(b) In view of reply to (a) above, does not arise.

Excise duty on chewing Tobacco and Gutka

1673. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI RAJU PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that annual excise duty on chewing tobacco and gutka has been reduced drastically during the last one year;

(b) if so, the revenue collected from chewing tobacco and gutka product manufacturers during the last two years, year-wise; and

(c) the top five manufacturers of chewing tobacco and gutka who have paid highest excise duty during the last two years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Lending to irrigation corporations by commercial banks

1674. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government has requested the Central Government to promote commercial banks to classify lending to irrigation/irrigation corporations constituted by the State Governments either as direct or indirect priority sector;

(b) whether Government are aware that such measures will ensure adequate financial resources for the State Government; and

(c) whether Government would take steps to make lending to irrigation/irrigation corporations by commercial banks more liberal by removing all restrictions and treating it as priority sector in Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) As per the standing guidelines issued by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to banks on lending for development of irrigation potential are classified as 'Direct Finance to Agriculture'. These include construction of shallow and deep tube wells, tanks, etc., and purchase of drilling units; constructing, deepening clearing of surface wells, boring of wells, electrification of wells, purchase of oil engines and installation of electric motor and pumps; purchase and installation of turbine pumps, construction of field channels, etc.; construction of lift irrigation project; installation of sprinkler irrigation system; purchase of generator sets for energisation of pumpsets used for agricultural purposes. Further, contribution made by banks to Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) from which State Governments or State sponsored Corporations can take loan for irrigation sector are also classified as 'Indirect Finance to Agriculture'. No specific proposal from Karnataka Government has been received by RBI for classifying lending to irrigation/irrigation